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•[534]
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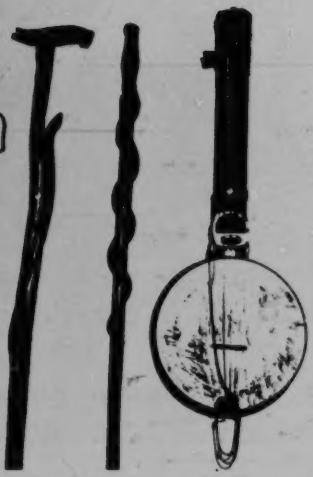

IIIa. Carved sticks and handmade banjo

IIIb. Carved sticks

324
532

IIIc. Carved stone fig

[following p. xxxii-c]

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322

IVa. Carved head of man on stick

IVb. Painted wooden figure

[534]

IVc. Carved wooden frog

IVd. Goatskin-covered log drum made by James Collier

[Following p. xxxii-D]

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754 he speak tuh me, I tell im all bout duh root wuk an wy uh fyuhd duh gun. I ax im wouldn he uh done duh same an he say, 'Cose, but dohn do it agen.'

"I bin tuh duh poeleece tuh hep me but dey cuss me out. Once wen dat poeleece show up, duh uhmun wut tryin tuh fix me staht combin uh haiah. She kep it up till duh poeleece jis walk away. Den I went tuh a root doctuh an he tole me duh poeleece caahn do nuttn long as duh uhmun comb uh haiah. He tell me tuh use tuhpentine tuh destroy duh han wut she put down fuh me. Duh uhmun jist keep on wukin gense me an nobody couldn do nuttn tuh stop uh so I know I bettuh moob fo she git muh spirit."

• 534 In Brownville we found a man who knew how to make the old time drums. He made one for us out of a hollow log, across the end of which he tightly stretched a goat skin. He fastened the skin to the log by means of a number of wooden pegs. Unlike modern drums, this one was taller than it was wide, measuring about eighteen inches in length and ten inches in diameter.[25]

(115) The drum maker, James Collier,* a middle-aged, intelligent, well-educated Negro (Plate VI), said he had made a number of drums in this primitive manner. Collier told us 764 that he had heard of drums having been used during funeral 533 ceremonies in former years. The mourners beat the drum while on the way to the cemetery; after arriving they marched around the grave in a ring and beat the drum and shouted.[24] "They call it the dead march," explained the man.

775 "The spirit don't stay in the grave," he went on. "When the funeral procession stahts tuh leave, the spirit leaves the body an follows the people frum the graveyahd. It nevuh stays with the body."[56] A little later he volunteered the additional information, "Fuh the spirit tuh rest in the grave (764) folks have tuh be buried at home. They nevuh feel right ef

* *James Collier, 806 West 39th Street.*



A, [See Category 142, plate following p. xxxii-F--Analyst]

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from her description seemed to have been a small scar, oval in shape and slightly raised.

We had been told by her neighbors that she, too, bore a mark, although none of them had seen it.

"Did he mark you too, Rosanna?"

She gave us a piercing look, ignored the question, and continued along another vein. "He eat funny kine uh food. Roas wile locus an mushruhm an tanyan root. It lak elephant-eah an tase like Irish potatuh. He plant mosly benne an rice. I plant a lill benne ebry yeah too. He use tuh beat benne seed in mawtuh an pestle, sometime wid a lill shuguh an sometime wid a lill salt an make a pase. He eat it on bread aw he eat it jis so."

We broached the subject of drums.

"Yes'm, dey use tuh dance tuh drums an dey beat um fuh fewnuls too.

"I wuz too lill tuh membuh anyting wut wuz said bout muh granpa, but muh pa wuk on duh fahm fuh is 'boss.' He make lot uh duh tings dey use. I ain got nuttn wut he had but dis." She brought forth a curious looking tool resembling a can opener with a hook in the end, which, she said, her father had used for extracting teeth. He had also been familiar with various roots and weeds, which he used in the preparation of medicines administered to the sick on the plantation.[48b]

We returned to the subject of the mark, at the mention of which her eyes suddenly narrowed.

"Wut yuh doin? Is yuh gonuh sen me back tuh Liberia?"

When we assured her that we had no such intention she became complacent and even voluble.

"Yes'm, he mahk me," she admitted, "on muh ches."

"What did he do it with? What sort of an instrument did he use?" we asked, vainly trying to conceal our interest.

"I dohn membuh. I wuz too lill."

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759 uh people. Deah so much debilment in ole Uncle John
754 Bowen dat finally he eat out hesef till he fix hesef an die."

We asked about the use of drums.

•534 "Yes'm, dey alluz use tuh beat duh drum wen somebody
[763] die tuh let duh udduh folks know bout duh det. An at
[764] fewnuls too, dey beat it."

Relative to spirits, she replied, "No'm, I caahn see spirits
776 cuz I ain bawn wid a caul. But now Bob Delegal he knows spirits. Down on Blackbeard Ilun, deah wuz a big hawg wut wuz a ebil spirit. Dey call um Blackbeard an dey try an try tuh kill um. So ole Bob Delegal cut up some silbuh an put it in he gun. He aim at duh hawg but he miss um an ole Bob Delegal fall down an couldn speak. Dey carry um home an he nebuh did talk no mo an duh nex day he die."

782 According to Sophie the old people on St. Catherines would pray at the rising and at the setting of the sun and at the conclusion of their prayers they would say the words "Meena, Mina, Mo." Asked if she knew the meaning of these words, she shook her head negatively.

115 "Yuh know, Susie Branch, who lib jis cross duh road deah, could tell yuh some uh deze tings too. We wuz chillun tuhgedduh down on St. Catherines Ilun. I gwine call uh."

In a moment Susie* arrived. Tall and thin, she was dressed in a red, green, and blue cotton plaid skirt and a man's shirt with the tail hanging loosely outside. She was very talkative and was enthusiastic in verifying many of the things that Sophie had mentioned.

115 Susie listened gravely as we inquired about her recollec-
829 tions of the old people in her family. She told us the following story: "Dey steal muh great-great-gran, uh name wuz Sukey, frum off duh beach in Africa wen she wuz a young miss. I dunno wut paht ub Africa she come frum. She alluz say she come frum Africa, duh country weah dey dohn weah no cloze. At duh plantation at St. Catherines she wuz

* *Susie Branch, White Bluff.*

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115 One of the oldest of the residents is white-haired F. J. Jackson * who remembers his childhood days on "Massuh George Wiley plantation" when many freed Negroes stayed on to work in the cotton fields. Years have weakened his once sturdy frame and slowed down both thought and gesture, but the light of humor still gleams in his dimmed eyes. We found Jackson in the kitchen of his comfortable frame bungalow, a new house built to replace a little old shanty that was burned down. He was making a casting net, his twisted old fingers still deft with the cords. He conversed like one glad of congenial company.

[227] [286]

"Does I membuh ole times?" he repeated in answer to our question. "Yes, I dohn git away frum dis place much now an uh jis sit roun an tink ub a long time ago. Deah wuzn no automobiles an duh only way tuh git tuh Savannah wuz by duh mule an caht aw git in duh road wid yuh foots. Not many uh duh people still livin wut come long wid me. Dey's bout gone. Me an ole man Bruurs Butluh's bout duh onlies ones lef uh duh fus settluhs.

115 567 "Yes, I membuhs duh plantation days. Massuh George wuz a slave dealuh fo duh waw, an he tuk us all, muh granddaddy, Lewis Hargray, an muh maw, an muh daddy—I name attuh him. Massuh George use tuh buy an sell but he wuz a good man an lot uh his slaves stay wid im on duh fahm attuh freedom. Dat big house in duh ben uh duh road wuz weah he lib, an dey still got duh ball an chain an duh banjo table in duh house now.

115 "Wen I lef duh fahm an moob tuh duh pint, ain but five wite families yuh. Ain no roadn nuttn, jis woods. I done a lot uh huntin an fishin. Deah wuz plenty uh deahs roun yuh.

"I use tuh go back tuh duh fahm on Satdy night fuh duh big times. Dey hab wut yuh call shouts. Wut kine uh music did us hab?" Jackson's aged eyes twinkled. "We use

533 534

* *F. J. Jackson, Grimball's Point. Deceased July, 1940.*

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drum an fife an we made duh drum frum holluh beehive lawg.[35b] I tell yuh how we done it. Yuh cut duh lawg an tak a deah hide an stretch obuh duh hole. Den yuh cut a hoop ban dat could lock roun duh lawg. Den yuh cut strips uh deah hide an make bans tuh hole duh head cuvvuh tight. How yuh make duh fife? Well, yuh jis cut reed cane.

"Lots uh udduh tings we make our ownsef," said the old man. "All duh fishin cawd made out uh deah hide, and we make mos uh duh house needs sech as cheahs an tables, baskets an buckets an stools, an sometime spoons an beds and cubbuds. Oh, deah's much I caahn tell off han."

Jackson's wife, who was not many years past middle age, came in about this time, greeted us, and sat down to listen.

"Wut dis bout signs?" Jackson laughed. "Sho I knows a few. Deah's some dat foetell wut comin. Wen yuh see duh hawgs bring straw in deah mouf, it's a sho sign wintuh goin tuh be cole. Ef duh roostuh come in duh doe an crow an den go out, it's sho sign uh sorruh in dat house. Duh owl is a true messenjuh uh det,[44] an wen yuh see a bunch uh crows flock up, yuh jis watch out fuh a fewnul. Deah's many signs an wunduhs. Duh Bible tell us so. I had a buckeye fuh many yeahs dat keep off bad luck. I use tuh have a hawse shoe ovuh duh doe uh duh ole house wut bun down,[11a] but I ain put one on dis un yet.

"Rootn?" he shook his head disdainfully. "I seen duh root man say he tak wuhrums an pins an tings out uh people, but I belieb it's some trick. I ain got no fait in dat stuff."

"But I have," put in his wife.* "Muh brothuh-in-law wuz fixed by his wife.[15] Not muh sistuh but anothuh woman. He tun intuh a invalid an laid down helpless fuh twenny-five yeahs. None uh the medical doctuhs couldn hep im, an several root doctuhs wuz called in.[48a] One of um said nuthin couldn be done fuh im cuz the pusson that put im in this fix wuz dead an theah wuzn nobody tuh throw it back tuh. So

* *Della Jackson, Grimball's Point.*

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829
764 pray, dey come in an put deah han on duh frien an say good-bye.[30, 31] Den dey go home."

764 "We beat duh drum agen at duh fewnul."[34] This from
533 Uncle Jack. "We call it duh dead mahch. Jis a long slow beat. Boom-boom-boom. Beat duh drum. Den stop. Den beat it agen."

534 We wanted to know what the drums looked like and the two men took turns in supplying the information.

Uncle Robert spoke first. "Duh ole drums wut duh Africans make wuz make out ub a skin uh some kine uh animal stretch obuh a holluh lawg. Dey didn eben take duh haiah off duh skin. Jis put it on datta way."[25]

Here Uncle Jack spoke up, "Ain so long sence dey stop makin drums. Wen I wuz a young man, we use tuh make um. Dey wuz fo-cawnuhed sometimes an wuz cubbuh wid a skin. Dey wuz bout fo feet high. At duh fewnul wen we beat duh drum we mahch roun duh grabe in a ring."

538 We asked if any of them knew any spider stories. There was some hesitancy; then they all said, "No'm."

[115] Celia Small,* a slim, middle-aged Negro woman, listened intently, nodding her head. We asked Celia if she had heard of them.

"Yes'm, muh granma she speak ub em many time an say dey's wicked." Celia laughed slyly. "She say dey talk bout um mung duh mens."

We asked if the spider had a name, like Brer Rabbit.

"No'm, he ain got no name. Lease, I ain nebuh heahd it. Only time I knows yuh call a spiduh wen yuh say, 'An Nancy got um,' an das wen he ketch duh fly.[53] Duh spiduh is wicked. Hab tuh be bery keahful bout um. He drop right down out uh duh sky on yuh."

"What about the spider stories?" we persisted.

Celia looked at us warningly. She laughed softly.

* *Celia Small, Wilmington Island.*

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285 of large round baskets, about twenty inches in diameter, with matching covers that fitted well down over the rim. Isaac used bulrushes and grasses for his material and worked with a sure deft touch that insured sturdy construction.

533 He remembered that drums had been used for a variety of
534 purposes during his youth. He said, "I use tuh dance tuh
duh drum.[33] I recall wen dey beat duh drum tuh call duh
[202] people on Harris Neck tuhgedduh fuh a dance aw fewnul.[36] Cose, dey hab a diffunt beat wen dey call um tuh a settin-up aw fewnul frum duh one dey use tuh call um tuh a dance.
534 Deah wuz two kine uh drum. One dey call duh kittle drum,
an one wuz duh bass drum. It stan bout two an a half foot
764 high. Dey use tuh alluz hab a settin-up wen somebody die. Wen folks would go tuh duh settin-up, dey would gib um bread an coffee.[37b, c]

795 "Dey still hole ribbuh baptisms yuh. Dey git tuh duh
796 ribbuh an attuh dey pray an sing up on duh bank, duh preachuh take duh candidates down in duh ribbuh. Fo he
[782] baptize each ub um, he say a prayuh tuh duh ribbuh an ax fuh all duh sins tuh be wash away."[63]

775 Remembering what we had been told about the haunted road to Maringo, we questioned Isaac and he said, "Yes'm, I hab heah bout duh hanted road tuh Maringo on duh Young Man Road. Lots uh folks say deah is spirits roun deah.[59] Wen yuh try tuh pass duh fawk in duh road, duh spirits stop yuh sometime an wohn let yuh by. Some uh duh spirits mus be good, fuh Ise heahd one story bout a man who wuz passin by an all ub a sudden his hawse jis stop shawt in his tracks. Jis wouldn go anudduh step. Duh man try an try, but he couldn make duh hawse moob. Den he see a spirit come long an it take hole ub duh hawse bridle an lead him long. Duh hawse go right long. Den duh spirit disappeah. I hab heahd lots uh stories bout dat road but uh nebuh see nuttn muhsef."

115 Our next interview was an unusually delightful one. Sit-

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754 bins cuz das wut mos folks make cunjuh outuh.[10] Ef dey git yuh haiah, yuh hab to do any ting dey wahn yuh tuh."

Alec stated solemnly, "Some folks is alluz sayin dat spirits is bodduhin um.[59] Nebuh hab trouble wid um muhsef."

(789) This was explained by Rachel who said that they knew a horse-shoe was an excellent remedy for "keeping duh hant away." [8]

"Witches come in at night an ride yuh too," [69] said Alec. "Jis ride duh folks till some ub um gits so po dey jis pass way."

754 231 We asked if they had ever heard that a frizzled chicken could dig up conjure laid down for a victim and they both nodded in affirmation.

"Chicken kin sho dig up cunjuh.[12a] Alluz hab heah uh dat," they echoed.

115 Alec told us that he had been born three years before freedom. He dwelt for a time on those long-past days and recollected some of the customs that had been prevalent then.

533 764 202 763 "Use tuh alluz beat duh drum at fewnuls. Right attuh duh pusson die, dey beat um tuh tell duh udduhs bout duh fewnul. Dey beat a long beat. Den dey stop. Den dey beat anudduh long beat. Ebrybody know dat dis mean somebody die. Dey beat duh drum in duh nex settlement tuh let duh folks in duh nex place heah." [26]

202 (534) We had previously been told of a similar means of communication employed by the people in this section in former years. At various points large metal discs were hung on trees and posts. On these messages had been beaten out and relayed from place to place. In this manner the people were informed of dances, picnics, meetings, wakes, and other such gatherings.[26]

764 The old couple went on to describe what took place at a wake.

"Wen dey fix duh cawpse, dey put pennies on duh eyes an

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hollowed-out log set on legs served as a watering trough for the ox.

Susan told us about the death of her mother, Rachel La Conte, who had come from Liberty County. "She die right in dis house. Dey measure uh wid a string. Dey beat duh drum tuh tell ebrybody bout duh settin-up.[26] We all set up wid duh body. We hab a big wash pot full uh coffee an hab a big sack uh soda crackuh fuh duh folks.[27b, c] Ebrybody place dey han bery light on uh eahs an on uh nose an den dey say, 'Dohn call me. I ain ready fuh tuh go yit.'[30, 31]

"We bury uh by tawch light attuh dahk. Ebrybody mahch roun duh grabe in a succle. Ebry night attuh duh fewnul I put food on duh poach fuh duh spirit tuh come git it.[56, 58]

"In duh ole days dey beat duh drum tuh call duh people tuh duh fewnul.[24] Dey beat it slow—boom—boom—boom. Wen dey wannuh stuhrup duh folks fuh a dance aw frolic, dey beats duh drum fas. Den dey knows it ain fuh no fewnul an dat it's fuh a good time. Duh people neahby, wen dey heahs it, beats deah drum an das how dey sends a message so udduh folks gits it.[26]

"I kin membuh two kine uh drum. Deah wuz duh lill kittle drum. Hit wuz bout fifteen inches cross an tree an a half foot high. Dat wuz duh drum dey beat fuh a settin-up."

Susan, too, gave us a description of the river baptisms. "Dey baptize in duh watuh down at duh landin. All duh candidates is dressed in wite. Dey all confess deah sins an say dey want tuh be save.

"We all mahch long in a line an sing an pray. Wen we git tuh duh ribbuh bank, we stop an duh preachuh say a long prayuh tuh duh Lawd. Den duh preachuh take duh candidates one by one and dey go down in duh ribbuh. Duh preachuh he say a prayuh tuh duh ribbuh. Dey alluz bap-

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754 wuz alluz fixin cunjuh.[15] She tie up ebryting in sacks. She git a lill foot track dus,[7] a lill haiah combins, an nail parin,[10] an she tie um up wid a lill rag. Cose, I dohn belieb in dis an
825 wen she die, I bun um. Ef yuh hab any trouble wid snakes,[50]
789 yuh ketch um an bun um wid duh trash. Den all duh whole kingdom uh snakes will leab yuh lone."[50]

We next questioned Aunty Jane about signs.

787 "Yes'm, I knows plenty uh signs but my head so full uh-rum I dohn know wich tuh tell yuh. Some ub um I beliebs
484 an some ub um I ain belieb. Wen yuh go on a journey an
789 yuh hattuh tun back, yuh make a cross mahk on duh dut an
781 spit on it, an it sho bad luck tuh bring a hoe in duh house."
777 The subject of drums was then brought up.

533 "I ain heah um beat duh drums in my chuch," Aunty Jane
534 said. "But I sho is heah plenty uh drum beat. We use tuh
535 alluz dance tuh duh drums. We dance roun in a succle an we hab drum an we hab goad rattle an we beat tin pan tuh-gedduh.[33] Some time dey hab sto-bought drum, but Alex Harris, he muh son, he make um. He lib up duh ribbuh."

534 Aunty Jane gave us a description of how the drums were made.

281 "Yuh kill a coon an yuh skin um an yuh tack duh skin up
237 side duh house tuh dry an yuh stretch um good till um tight an smood. Den yuh stretch um obuh duh en ub a holluh tree trunk.[35] Sometime dey is big drum wut stan as high as dis." She raised her hand about three feet from the ground.

534 We asked Aunty Jane what trees they used. Did they use
824 oak?

"No, ma'am, it ain good tuh use oak ef yuh kin hep it. It too hahd. Yuh take a good cypress aw ceduh wut eat out on duh inside an yuh take um an scoop um out an stretch duh skin obuh duh ens. Sometime yuh kin fine a holly wut'll
535 do. Alex, he make drum up tuh two yeah ago an we sho hab
533 big time doin duh dances wile dey beat duh drums. Wene-buh we happy aw wannuh celebrate, we dance." At this

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point Aunty Jane rose to give us an exhibition of two dances, the Buzzard Lope and the Snake Hip.[17]

Across the highway from Aunty Jane's settlement, about one mile north of Darien, back of a turpentine still, is an irregular settlement of small houses, most of which are enclosed by high dilapidated paling fences. Here Wallace Quarterman * occupied a cabin with his daughter, Abby Gibson. Wallace was old but with a clear mind, and he enjoyed a high standing in his community. We felt that he would know about the old beliefs and customs.

We left the highway on a narrow dirt road, little more than a path through the bush, and after much winding in and out we came upon a street of Negro cabins with their enclosed yards, vegetable patches, and tumbled down sheds. Wallace was sitting on the porch of Abby's house. Lizzie Sanders volunteered to be our guide and paid a visit to Wallace along with us.

We asked him how old he was and where he was born.

"Ise bawn July 14, 1844. Now figguh dat out fuh yuhsef, missus. Ise bawn at Sout Hampton, Libuty County, an I belong tuh Roswell King, but he done die long bout sometime in duh fifties an Ise sole fuh debt tuh Cunl Fred Waring on Skidaway Ilun. Ise bin bout fifteen wen I sen tuh Skidaway."

For a long time we had wanted to establish some connection with Skidaway Island that reached back before the War between the States. We questioned Wallace about the church on Skidaway.

"We sho did hab big time goin tuh chuch in doze days. Not many uh deze Nigguhs kin shout tuhday duh way us could den. Yuh needs a drum fuh shoutin."

We asked if they shouted to a drum then.

"We sho did. We beat a drum at duh chuch an we beat a drum on duh way tuh duh grabeyahd tuh bury um. We

* *Wallace Quarterman, Darien. Deceased autumn, 1938.*

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533
534 walks in a long line moanin an we beats duh drum all duh
764 way." [24]

We inquired about the making of drums and the kinds of
534 drums.

"We makes drums out uh sheep hide but we gottuh dry
[237] um an stretch duh skin obuh. Some makes it out uh holluh lawgs wid skin obuh duh en an some ub um is as long as tree feet." [25]

We asked the old man if he remembered any slaves that
567 were real Africans.
829 "Sho I membuhs lots ub um. Ain I sees plenty ub um? I membuhs one boatload uh seben aw eight wut come down frum Savannah. Dat wuz jis a lill befo duh waw. Robbie McQueen wuz African an Katie an ole man Jacob King, dey's all African. I membuhs um all. Ole man King he lib till he ole, lib till I hep bury um. But yuh caahn unduhstan much wut deze people say. Dey caahn unduhstan yo talk an you caahn unduhstan dey talk. Dey go 'quack, quack, quack,' jis as fas as a hawse kin run, an muh pa say, 'Ain no good tuh lissen tuh um.' Dey git long all right but yuh know dey wuz a lot ub um wut ain stay down yuh."

Did he mean the Ibos * on St. Simons who walked into the water?

"No, ma'am, I ain mean dem. Ain yuh heah bout um? Well, at dat time Mr. Blue he wuz duh obuhseeuh an Mr. Blue put um in duh fiel, but he couldn do nuttn wid um. Dey gabble, gabble, gabble, an nobody couldn unduhstan um an dey didn know how tuh wuk right. Mr. Blue he go down one mawnin wid a long whip fuh tuh whip um good."

"Mr. Blue was a hard overseer?" we asked.

567 "No, ma'am, he ain hahd, he jis caahn make um unduh-
829 stan. Dey's foolish actin. He got tuh whip um, Mr. Blue,
789 he ain hab no choice. Anyways, he whip um good an dey

* *A group of slaves from the Ibo tribe refused to submit to slavery. Led by their chief and singing tribal songs, they walked into the water and were drowned at a point on Dunbar Creek later named Ebo (Ibo) Landing.*

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Club. We followed the road for about two miles and came finally to a signpost directing us to turn right in order to reach the club. This section in former times had been occupied by extensive plantation holdings. Most of these estates had been deserted for years and now and then we saw a house, once evidently charming but now in a dilapidated and crumbling condition.

Through an old gateway to what had once been a prosperous estate we rode past acres now weed-grown and neglected. At last we came upon a one story white plantation house. Inside blinds were at all of the French windows and the wide floor boards gave indication that the house had probably been standing for about one hundred years.

The man for whom we were looking was plowing in a field at the rear. Baker's rugged build and his keen intellect made it difficult to believe that he was in his late seventies. For years he had acted as caretaker of the club and often lived in the plantation house, as it had been unoccupied for some time.

He had heard of the custom of beating drums to warn people of a recent death. He said, "Dey use tuh alluz beat duh drum aw blow duh hawn wen somebody die.[24] Dey beat two licks on duh drum, den dey stop, den dey beat tree licks. Wen yuh beat dat, yuh know somebody done die.[24, 26] Lots uh duh drums wuz home-made. Dey wuz made out uh goat skin aw coon skin wut stretch out obuh hoops.[25] Deah wuz tree sizes uh drums. Deah wuz duh big barrel drum. It wuz highuhn it wuz cross. Den deah wuz a lill drum frum twelve tuh fifteen inches wide an bout eighteen inches high. Duh udduh drum wuz duh medium size, kine uh in between duh udduh two. Duh big drum wuz duh one dey beat at duh wake. Dey use drums at dances an meetins, too.

"Wen we hab a fewnul, we all mahch roun duh grabe in a ring. We shout an pray."

We wanted to know if river baptisms were always held

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## SAPELO ISLAND

361 Small Negro settlements are scattered at the north end of
491 Sapelo and are reached by winding roads that cut through
the tropical woodlands and brush. The Negroes are de-
461 scendants of the slaves of the plantation era. Many lead an
easy, carefree life which consists chiefly of fishing, crabbing,
and cultivating a small patch of garden, while others engage
in regular employment at the sawmill or in the company
offices.

178 Living an isolated island existence, these Negroes have
preserved many customs and beliefs of their ancestors, as
well as the dialect of the older coastal Negro. An old oxcart
(493) (Plate XVI)[A] jogging along a tree shaded road is a familar
(412) sight, and under the guidance of a Negro boy named Julius
we discovered instances of crude wooden implements in com-
(124) mon usage. The many Negroes interviewed gave a graphic
picture of survival elements that have persisted since the
days when slave ships brought their ancestors to the new
country.

115 One of the oldest inhabititants is Katie Brown (Plate
XV),*[B] whose grandmother, Margaret, was a daughter of
Belali Mohomet, the Mohammedan slave driver of Thomas
Spalding. Katie, sunning herself on the back steps of her
small house, was disposed to be gracious to us. Shaking her
(123) head at the size of the shoes brought to her as an incentive to
conversation, she relented at the sight of some pipe tobacco
and began to talk:

533 "I dunno bout drums at chuches. Use tuh hab um long
• 534 time ago, but not now on duh ilun,—leas I ain heah um.
Hahves time wuz time fuh drums. Den dey hab big times.[23]
527 Wen hahves in, dey hab big gadderin. Dey beat drum,
rattle dry goad wid seed in um, an beat big flat tin
plates.[23, 25] Dey shout an moob roun in succle an look lak
mahch goin tuh heabm. Hahves festival, dey call it."

764 In response to our query about "set-ups" Katie replied,

* *Katie Brown, Sapelo Island.*



A, [See Category 493, plate following p. xxxii-U--Analyst]
B, [See Category 142, plates following p. xxxii-Q and R--Analyst]

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the current belief concerning the necessity of asking leave to enter the graveyard.

"Grant Johnson, he wannuh cut some wood an he git obuh duh fence uh duh cimiterry," he explained to us. "He didn ax leab uh nobody." [80] He wuz a cuttin duh wood down as fas as he could wen all ub a sudden he see a big black dog wut [84] come attuh im. Dat wuz a shadduh an he ain lose no time in jumpin obuh duh fence.

"Wen yuh hab a fewnul eben today, yuh hab tuh ax leab tuh entuh duh cimiterry gate. Duh spirit ain gonuh let yuh in lessn yuh ask leab ub it."

We visited Nero Jones,* an elderly Negro who lived on his sixty-five-acre tract of land with a daughter, Henrietta. Sitting beneath the protecting shade of an arbor which overlooked a peanut field, the old man was busily engaged in shucking a large basket of the nuts.

He, too, remembered having seen harvest dances. "We use tuh hab big time at hahves," [88] he began. "We pray an sing duh night tru. Wen duh sun riz we go out an dance. We hab big beatin uh drums an sometimes we dry duh goads an leab duh seed in um. Dey make good rattle.[23, 25]

"I membuh Uncle Calina an An Hannah well. Dey mighty ole an dey bun up in duh house. Day talk lot uh funny talk tuh each udduh an dey is mighty puhticuluh bout prayin. Dey pray on duh bead. Duh ole man he say 'Ameela' and An Hannah she say 'Hakabara.' "

Later we drove slowly over the flat grass-lands to Hog Hammock, another Negro community at the south end of Sapelo. The red-legged herons winging their way against the vivid blue of the sky, the dense foliage rimming the edges of the inland marshes, clumps of feathery bush, all contributed to the tropical beauty of the island.

At Hog Hammock we visited Shad Hall (Plate XVII),** A

* *Nero Jones, Sapelo Island.*
** *Shad Hall, Sapelo Island.*



A, [See Category 142, plate following p. xxxii-V--Analyst]

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829 ain weah no cloze, he say, but a leedle clawt string roun em.

"William say dat dey ain hab much trouble gittin tings tuh eat in Africa cuz so much grow free. Dey cut duh tree an let duh suhrup drain out. Duh women tie duh leedle chillun an duh babies on tuh deah back tuh carry em roun.

829 "He say wen dey come in duh boats tuh ketch em, dey
567 trail a red flag an dey ain use tuh see red an das duh way dey git duh load. William he talk funny talk. He hab funny wud fuh tings. I use tuh know some ub em, cuz he teach em tuh me but it so long, missus, Ise fuhgit. But I membuh he
(192) say pot call 'sojo' an watuh 'deloe' an he call fyuh 'diffy.' He sho did dat, but das all I kin membuh. Ef uh study bout em, maybe I kin membuh some mo."

829 We wanted a description of William, the African.

"William a good size man, heaby set. He hab two leedle line mahk on he right cheek." [14]

527 Ryna mused: "Tings is sho change. Wen we is young, we use tuh hab big frolic an dance in a ring an shout tuh drum.
•534 Sometime we hab rattle made out uh dry goad an we rattle
533 em an make good music." [23, 25]

We wondered if she, too, remembered the Buzzard Lope
535 and she assured us, "Yes'm, sho I knows it. Ebrybody knows it." [17]

754 Shortly afterward the conversation turned to conjure and the old woman told us, "I sho heah plenty bout da ting. Way
789 back we hab plenty discussion bout root makuhs.[22, 48] I membuh my huzbun Hillard Johnson speak bout a root makuh in Darien wut make duh pot bile widout fyuh. My huzbun he frum Sapelo. He could tell yuh bout sech tings ef he wuz libin."

115 A short distance away lived Charles Hunter,* whose small board house was set well back from the road. The front
(351) yard enclosed by a wire fence was planted with a profusion of brightly colored flowers along the sandy walk leading to

* *Charles Hunter, Harrington, St. Simons Island.*

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Asked if he remembered any other Africans who tied their heads up, the old man told us, "I membuh a ole uhmun name Daphne. He didn tie he head up lak ole man Israel. He weah loose wite veil on he head. He wuz shahp-feechuh too an light uh complexion. He weah one ring in he eah fuh he eyes.[37] I hab refrence to it bein some kine uh pruhtection tuh he eyes. Wen he pray, he bow two aw tree times in duh middle uh duh prayuh."

We asked about the music they used to have and what they used for dancing in the old days.

"We ain dance den duh way dey dances now. We dance roun in a succle an den we dances fuh prayin.[19a] I membuhs we use tuh hab drums fuh music an we beat duh drum fuh dances.[33]

"Now, ole man Dembo he use tuh beat duh drum tuh duh fewnul,[24] but Mr. Couper he stop dat. He say he dohn wahn drums beatin roun duh dead. But I watch em hab a fewnul. I gits behine duh bush an hide an watch an see wut dey does. Dey go in a long pruhcession tuh duh buryin groun an dey beat duh drums long duh way an dey submit duh body tuh duh groun. Den dey dance roun in a ring an dey motion wid duh hans.[18] Dey sing duh body tuh duh grabe an den dey let it down an den dey succle roun in duh dance.

"Dey ain hab no chuch in doze days an wen dey wannuh pray, dey git behine duh house aw hide someweah an make a great prayuh. Dey ain suppose tuh call on duh Lawd; dey hadduh call on duh massuh an ef dey ain do dat, dey git nine an tutty.

"Dey ain marry den duh way dey do now. Attuh slabery dey hadduh remarry. Dey hab big baptizin in duh ribbuh lak dey do tuhday an dey dip em on duh ebb tuh wash duh sins away an duh preachuh he make a great prayuh tuh duh ribbuh.[63]

"Ole man Okra he a great un fuh buil drum.[25] He take a calf skin an tan it an make duh side uh maple. Ise pretty

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534 sho it wuz maple. He stretch em obuh it good. It wuz bout eighteen inches wide an fifteen inches deep wen he finish it. He beat it wid a stick. Ole man Okra he sho kin chase a drum. Ole man Jesse he frum Africa, too, an he make he own drum."

829 When we asked Ben if he remembered any African words, he replied, "I know dat deah wuz a ole man, it bin so long I caahn relate his name, at duh plantation wut wehn roun wid ole man Okra an I membuh well he call all duh fish an ting uh duh ribbuh by duh name uh 'nyana' an den I heah pancake call 'flim.' Muh granmothuh Hettie, duh mothuh uh muh mothuh Bella, he come from Africa too an he huzbun come frum Africa. He name wuz Alex Boyd. Alex wuz bery small felluh but heaby an he hab dahk skin an shahp-feechuch. Yes, ma'am, he talk African but he stuttuh so he dohn talk much roun us chillun, cuz we make fun at im, an as I say befo, I wuz small lad den. Alex wuz knock-kneed an he tie he head up in a clawt."

829 Had his grandmother, Hettie, ever talked to him about Africa, we wanted to know.

Ben told us, "Many time. He tell some tings I membuh. He say he mus be bout tutteen aw foeteen wen dey bring im frum Africa. He say deah wuz great talk bout comin tuh dis country an some men tell em it would take only two aw tree days tuh git deah. Dey wuz all happy tuh come. Him an lot uh friens come tuhgedduh.

"Wen Hettie fus come, he say he feel worried cuz he couldn unnuhstan duh talk yuh an many udduh tings bein so diffunt frum he own country. He hab two sistuhs an tree brothuhs but dey couldn git a chance tuh come. He hab no refrence tuh he mothuh dan tuh he fathuh. An he say dat in Africa he lib in a 'groun house.' It wuz a squeah house, an he say dat he didn lib close tuh a salt ribbuh but weah deah wuz a lot uh wile swamp. Wen he fus come tuh dis country, he didn unnuhstan bout fish. But he tell a lot bout monkey

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ple an dey all say dey plant duh crop an dey dohn hadduh wuk it. I heah lot ub em tell how dey git obuh yuh. Dey trap em on a boat wid a red flag."

Old Tom Floyd was not the only root doctor Floyd could remember. There were many others, he said, some still living and plying their trade.[48]

"I knows a root makuh now," he told us. "Uncle Quawt, he root makuh. Does yuh know him?"

We replied that we had known Quarterman for some time but that he had never told us he could work roots.

"Maybe he ain tell yuh but he kin wuk em all right.[48] He kin put a cunjuh on wid a goofa bag as good as anybody. Now, I tell yuh bout im. Deah's two felluhs in Brunswick wut does a lill killin an wen duh case is call, two buzzud light on duh cote house an wen duh men come up befo duh jedge, he let um go free. Now, Uncle Quawt, he had sumpm tuh do wid dat. Dey ain so many root makuhs lef."

Floyd, too, had heard of Alexander, the old African root maker.

"Yes'm, Ise heahd much bout im. He wuz still libin wen I wuz a boy. Ise heahd em tell plenty uh tales bout im. Dey say duh boat leab fuh Savannah an Alexanduh he yuh. He say good-bye frum yuh an tell em tuh go on widout im but he say he see em deah an wen duh boat git tuh Savannah, Alexanduh he in Savannah on duh dock tuh ketch duh line."

Pleasant memories associated with the social activities of the past caused Floyd to ponder abstractedly for a time. Finally he roused himself and told us, "We use tuh dance roun tuh a drum an a rattle goad. Dey could make good drum frum hawg an bass drum frum cow.[25] Doze days dey ain only beat duh drum fuh dancin; dey beat it on duh way tuh duh grabe yahd.[24] Dat wuz fuh duh det mahch wen dey use tuh carry duh body in a wagon. Dey hab lot uh singin den too an dey hab singin at duh baptizin. Den dey baptize em in duh ribbuh jis lak dey does now. Dey sing wid all duh

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all gives praise fuh the good crop an then we shouts an sings all night.[38] An wen the sun rise, we stahts tuh dance. It ain so long since they stop that back in the woods but these young people they does new kines uh dances."

Horace interjected here, "I seen em do those dances back in the woods but not yuh."

We asked what sort of music they had for the dances.

"They mosly have guitah now," said Hettie, "an we use tuh use guitah too, but we makes em frum goad an we beats drums too. We makes em frum coon hide stretched ovuh hoops.[35] Muh step-fathuh, Andrew King, who lived down the Satilla Rivuh, use tuh tell me how it wuz in the ole days. He tell me they bring a boatload of them Africans ovuh frum a ilun tuh theah plantation. That wuz jis befo the waw an they wuz runnin frum the Yankees."

We asked if she had known any families who refused to eat certain kinds of food.

"Thas a hahd un, ma'am. Mos people eat wut they kin git but I knowd Chahlotte Froman who wouldn tech chicken. They all say that chicken wuz a duhty animal an they ain gonuh eat em.[65] They keeps chicken cuz frizzle chicken is a wise chicken. It sho kin fine wut you caahn fine."[13a]

We asked about conjure.

Horace laughed and said, "I tell yuh, ma'am, they's mo doin of cunjuh up roun Savannah than theah is in these pahts. I jis bin up theah an I ain nevuh heahd so much talk of it in muh life. Theah's a lot of ole customs still roun an we've all heahd bout em an knows bout em but theah ain nobody much wut's ole nuff tuh pay much tention tuh em." Horace smiled with the superiority of the younger generation.

Later we visited Henry Williams,* (Plate XIX), A whose little house (Plate XX) B sat back in a clump of tall, overgrown brush that grew close to the dilapidated paling fence.

* *Henry Williams, St. Marys.*



A, [See Category 142, plate following p. xxxii-AA--Analyst]
B, [See Category 342, plate following p. xxxii-BB--Analyst]

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829 wen she go tuh eat an she alluz eat out of a wooden bowl. Sometimes she use a spoon, but mos of the time she jis eat with uh finguhs. Muh granfathuh use tuh set with uh an talk. They talk a lot an speak the African wuds an souns. I ain know wut they talk bout, mosly bout the times in Africa I think. One soun aw wud I membuh they say wuz 'cupla' but wut it mean I sho dohn know.

415 "Fuh the longes time I have a wooden bowl [7g] bout lak the one Nanny Mammy have. It wuz holluhed out jis as smooth, an it wuz made of some kine uh dahk wood. Not long ago muh wife say she ain see da bowl in monuh yeah. She think mebbe one uh the chillun, muh grans I mean, mustuh misplace it someway.

252 "Theah's a lot uh things I membuh at the plantation. Muh grandmothuh, Sally, she make the bes rice cakes. She make em with brown shuguh. She ain mix em up with
• 534 honey. I seed em make home-made drums theah too. They
533 stretch a sheep-hide ovuh a roun bucket.[25] Then they beats
764 the drum in the fewnul cession wen they mahches tuh the buryin groun.[24] Long then wen a pusson die they have a settin-up [37a] an have a suppuh too.[37b, c] Theah wuz an still
764 is pussons wut put a dish uh food out on the poach fuh the
782 spirit, but some of em take cooked food tuh the grave an leave it theah fuh the spirit.[58] They say, too, that a frizzle
754 chicken kin dig up any kine uh cunjuh.[13] Theah's a lot uh
231 talk bout cunjuh these days mung the young folks, even mo
825 than in the ole days." [15]

A short while later, our interview concluded, we thanked
115 the old man for the information and took our leave. Looking back we saw him sitting on the steps of his house, his gray head bent, to all appearances lost in a reverie of the past.

4: Caráwan & Carawan B,Z-5 (1959-1988) 1989
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Johns Island

*Mr. James Mackey*

## WE IS HAD A DANCE

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Dance! That's my favorite. In certain times of the year like Fourth of July or Labor Days, we is had a dance. Had guitar and all like that. First of all we used something called accordion, and we'd beat stick. Then after that we was enabled enough to buy something call tambourine. A man lived back in the woods used to play guitar. James White used to play fiddle. And another fellow and I used to assist him. When I don't feel like play awhile, I dance in on the set until it broke up. We didn't have this new style they got here now—hug together.

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535

We dance eight in a group. Two on the head this side, two on that side, two on the side like that. The fellow who knock the tambourine, he teach the set. He says "swing to your left," then you come swing that. Then swing your partner, then swing home. Then he say "promenade all," they all hook hands, grab hands together and just soshay all around, 'til they get back to the place what they was.

Later on after these girls used to come from the city, then they used to dance hug together.

142
291

4: Carawan & Carawan B,Z-5 (1959-1988) 1989
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South Carolina
Johns Island

*Mrs. Janie Hunter*

## WHEN YOU GET TO OLD AGE YOU TURN A HAG

795 I say see it to believe it. Ghosts shows up to some people, and some people they don't. But I'm not scared of 'em. I'm more scared of live.

796 888 But hags, that's real. When you get to old age, you turn a hag. Hags come to your house and hag your children. Children can't sleep, or a hag take somebody child and put 'em under the bed. Sometime a hag sit on you and keep you from getting up, try to smother you.

But you could tell a hag. I heard my old people say, if you want to tell a hag, put a broom 'cross your door. If that's a hag, he going take up that broom, ain't going step across it.

(789) If hag bother you, use salt and pepper. Sprinkle either by your bed or 'cross your door and they won't come in. The salt burn their skin.

*Mrs. Mary Pinckney*

## I GOT A BLUESY FEELING

533 I like blues. My uncles Benji and Willis—oh, they could sing! Willis is come home 'round twelve and one o'clock in the night and wake up everybody on the hill. Go one side by the pump and he sing that blues from then 'til four in the morning. Wake up everybody. Mama is come outside, say, "Willis, why don't you come on in the house?"

"Can't come in the house right now, Doll, I got a bluesy feeling." He sing.

(534) And Benji, Benji could sing! He have one them cowhorn and he get up and put it to his mouth and blow 'em. Just like a trumpet. And Willis be singing the song and he be blowing the horn and they going down the road blowing and singing. And I be right there listening to 'em. I follow them too. They is like for I follow them 'cause I sing right along with them.

(534) My brothers sing blues too. Joe, he like all different kind of song—spiritual and blues. Sometime he be home by heself and go on the road or stay on that porch or go under a tree, sit down and just play his guitar and sing his song. And I'll go and help him.

4: Carawan & Carawan B,Z-5 (1959-1988) 1989
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*Mrs. Janie Hunter*

## WHAT I KNOW I TRY TO TEACH MY CHILDREN

186 538 173 867 869

When I come up, my parents sat us down on Sunday afternoon after church and taught us stories, and their life stories—how they came up. Some of my great-grandparents came up in slavery times, and all these stories and folktales that I tell are from way back in the history of slavery times.

869

And what I know I try to teach my children—my seven daughters and six sons, and ninety-five grandchildren, and twenty-four great-grands, so as the generations go on, it won't die out. I think the past is very important for them to understand. We don't know what the future will bring. So maybe the future will bring back the past. There's a lot of people on this island, older than I am, they know all about the past, but they feel so embarrassed to explain about it. They figure people are going to look down on them as nothing. But I always say, "I am just what I am." And what I want my children to know that when I'm gone, my children can teach their children.

186 178 867 869

So I have over thirty head of children come to my home on Sunday afternoons and I teach them different things that it's important for them to know. They rather hear stories and folktales. I think if all the mothers would teach what they know, they would keep their children out of trouble. They would have something to build upon. They'd have something to look forward to. But to just turn them loose and not let them know what to expect, that's why children be in so much shock when things happen to them. It's our parents' task to teach our children.

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186 533 534

The songs tell stories too—the religious songs and the blues songs. Those songs gave us a feeling to go on. That's all we had to live by. We sang and the games we played. We didn't go to piccolo or none of that—there wasn't any of that in those times. We take a tub and washboard and make our own music. On Sunday evening my father's house was full up. We sing and shout and feel good about it. We had a good time. We didn't be sick. We didn't get in no trouble. Everybody loved one another. And we still love to sing. That is our talent God bless us with. We love to sing and we love people. We love to get along with everybody. We was brought up like that.

9: Parrish B-4,5 (ca.1916-1941) 1942
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000 excitement that may lead to such exaltation as few white people ever see. It is an unforgettable experience, rare in these days of practical religion when all miracles are scientifically explained.

633 I notice that men are particularly partial to the work songs, of which the shanties [16] of the black stevedores are the most amusing. When a plantation is near a navigable river or salt water, songs like "Stevedore's in trouble, Carry 'im to the Aly-mo," and "Sandyanna" may possibly be heard. Both carry in their titles the date of their inception, and obviously hark back to the period of the Mexican War. Others bring in Australia and Rio along with "Go 'round the Horn, Yalla Gal—Go 'round the Horn" and suggest the period of the windjammer.

At The Mills on the west side of St. Simon's—in the eighteen-eighties—the Inland Waterway was filled with sailing vessels from all parts of the world.[17] These were loaded with lumber that had been floated down the Altamaha; but, as Cap'n Joe, the crew leader, says, so little lumber moves these days that the songs that helped the stevedores to handle the great "sticks" are well-nigh forgotten. A pity to let one of them be lost.

[184] Then there are the "rags," the "fiddle" or "sinful" songs. These may be plentiful in the interior; but on the coast, where the Negroes are apparently more religious, they have been the most difficult to locate.

533 198 Where there are wide fields, musical half-yodeled calls often bring "'sponses" from laborers a mile away. When a field needs to be burned over, a sail is flapping idly, or rice is to be fanned, you may hear a Negro "calling the wind": "Co' win'! Co' win'! Co'! Co'!" A prolonged whistle follows:

—in the African manner of calling the rain.[18]

533 534 If a plantation is sufficiently remote, and the owner is ultra-modern in his taste, such a jazz band may be organized as has not been heard in many a year. It is only necessary to call for the services of those who can still "rap the bones" (real bones of a thickness and length suitable for manipulation between the middle fingers,

[16] Or chanteys—*as some prefer to call them.*
[17] *Julia Armstrong tells me they were lined up "like sardines in a box."*
[18] *A gramophone record of a Togoland rain invocation is astonishingly similar.*

9: Parrish B-4,5 (ca.1916-1941) 1942
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which produce an effect similar to that of castanets), or play upon the well-seasoned and polished "old jawbone" of some ox, horse, or mule [19] with the aid of a blacksmith's rasp or a large key (a rhythmic tooth-rattling performance), or extract music (of a kind) from the U-shaped iron clevis used for hitching horses to the old-fashioned plow—which, when suspended by a string and beaten upon with its pin, makes a very fair "tr'angle," as the ante-bellum Negroes called it. If you live in the neighborhood of a cane-brake, there may be an old Negro who can demonstrate the kind of music to be obtained from a set of reed-pipes, called "quills," made from graduated lengths of cane tightly wedged into a frame. On occasion, a washboard—played with a thimble—and a frying pan may be added. Now and then a fiddle, "box" (guitar), mouth-organ, or jew's harp is heard in rural districts, but rarely a drum—except in the hands of musically illiterate members [20] of the Sanctified Church who have done as much real harm to the Negro's innate gift of rhythm as have the white man's hymn books.

In New Orleans, wooden horns and home-made drums (made out of nail kegs), with skin tightly stretched over one end, were used in olden times, but were forbidden on plantations where the blacks outnumbered the whites. Planters were well aware of the ability of some of their slaves to use them in the same manner as we use the Morse code,[21] and it was not considered safe to risk the general uprising which might have resulted.

The good-natured ingenuity of the Negroes in circumventing plantation rules speaks well for their ready wit, and it always rouses my admiration to see the way in which the McIntosh County "shouters" tap their heels on the resonant board floor [22] to imitate the beat of the drum their forebears were not allowed to have. Those who hear the records of the musical chants which accompany the ring-shout—made for me by Dr. Lorenzo D. Turner—cannot believe that a drum is not used, though how the effect is achieved with the heels alone—when they barely leave the floor—remains a puzzle (Illustration 24).

[19] *It may even be decorated with ribbons, as in the old days.*

[20] *Joe Loman once said, "The Sanctified people must think God is deef, they make so much noise."*

[21] *In 1740, following the Stono uprising of 1739, the great slave act was passed. One section prohibited the beating of drums or the blowing of horns, although in cities this provision was not rigidly observed.*

[22] *I am told, however, that in South Africa the natives use their heels on the sun-baked clay of the village square in precisely the same manner.*

A. [For Illustration 24, see Category 535, plate facing p. 144.--Analyst]

9: Parrish B-4,5 (ca.1916-1941) 1942
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## FIDDLE SONGS—FRAGMENTS

533 Ten years ago, when I hunted up the local fiddler, Green Harris, who was already seventy-six, I tried to find out about the tunes he used to play for the "sinful" young Negroes on St. Simon's. He said: "You caught me without my studyin' cap—they jus' gone." He would not even bring out his fiddle.[15] Finally he admitted he [534] had loaned it: "They're holdin' a revival this week an' I don't want it around the house." The implication was that temptation might be too strong for him—besides, it was improper to have a fiddle in your possession at such a time. After two unsuccessful visits I heard him play old-fashioned dance tunes which had been favorites south of the Mason and Dixon Line in ante-bellum days. Here are the harmless, 533 fragmentary verses he gave me: 539

Tune my fiddle, tune it good
The little neighbor in the neighborhood.

I do I do I tries to do
Put on de silver slippers.
An' I do I do an' I do no mor'
Put on de silver slippers.
I do I do my huckleberry do
Put on de silver slippers.
My ole Miss' promis' me
Put on de silver slippers.
When she die she set me free
Put on de silver slippers.
She live so long till her head got bal'
Put on de silver slippers.
It look like she never die
Put on de silver slippers.
I do I do I do no mor' my huckleberry do
Put on de silver slippers.
Oh how happy I feel
Put on de silver slippers.

[15] Joel Chandler Harris tells us in The Critic, December 15, 1883, that "The banjo may be the typical instrument of the plantation negroes, but I have never seen a plantation negro play it. I have heard them make sweet music with the quills—Pan's pipes; I have heard them play passably on the fiddle. . . . and beat . . . on the triangle . . . I have heard them blow a tin-trumpet with surprising skill; but I have never seen a banjo." Cable, himself, grants that the favorite instrument of the negroes of the Southern states is the fiddle.

9: Parrish B-4,5 (ca.1916-1941) 1942
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533
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(534)

Old Jim Gardiner rapped the bones to the rhythm of the two similar jingles that follow:

Once I went out huntin'
I heard de possum sneeze
I holler back to Susan
Put on de pot o' peas.

I went down to Missy house
Missy was in bed
I took de marrow bone
An' beat her in de head.

Chorus: Ding dang me one
Ding dang.
Ding dang me two
Ding dang.
Ding dang me three
Ding dang.
Ding dang me four
Ding dang.

Toad frog sittin' on the railroad track
Train come along an' break his back.

Chorus:

9: Parrish B-4,5 (ca.1916-1941) 1942
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are now losing—and the resistance of the slaves to "the miasma of the rice fields" enabled them to take care of the crop during the "pestilential season" with the minimum of white supervision. In consequence, all white residents who could leave [25] fled at nightfall to the "salts"—as the sea marshes were called—or to the dry and higher pine land, whichever might be nearer, and the Negroes were left very much to themselves. It requires no stretch of the imagination to assume that the beloved rhythms and dances that had been brought from Africa were kept alive in just this way. For which let me say—God be praised! I have never been able to believe that all virtue was vested in the white man or his music.

Another statement of Lyell's is so accurate that it should be given here. He tells us that "The slaves identify themselves with the master, and their sense of their own importance rises with his success in life." Mrs. Shadman, who knew all the ex-slaves on St. Simon's, told me that Maum Rhina at Cannon's Point was heard to say: "I hol' my head jus' as high as my Missus. I'se a Wylly nig'ah." The Wylly Negroes always felt they were superior to those of the Hazzards, who lived on the adjoining plantation. The feeling of animosity that has persisted for more than a century among the descendants of the slaves of the two plantations may be because of the duel over a boundary dispute, in which young Wylly was killed by his neighbor, Dr. Hazzard.

In spite of the Negroes being passionately fond of music and dancing, the activity of the Baptist and Methodist missionaries was such before 1845 that Lyell tells us: "On the Hopeton Plantation above twenty violins have been silenced." The ban on secular music was the same in the vicinity of Beaufort, South Carolina. The editors of *Slave Songs of the United States* reported that they never saw a musical instrument among the Port Royal freedmen, and mentioned that the last violin, owned by a "wordly man," disappeared from Coffin's Point in 1861. They expressed regret that they could not obtain enough secular songs to make a division by themselves, and went on to say: "It is . . . already becoming difficult to obtain these songs. Even the 'spirituals' are going out of use on the plantations, superseded by the new style of religious music, 'closely imitated from the white people.' " The statement made by the editors that "The same songs are used for rowing as for shouting," holds true on the coast of Georgia, and it is interesting to find that the identical tunes were favorites the length of the sea-island chain between the Peedee and the Satilla Rivers. (Map, page xxxii.)

The similarity of the speech, customs, and music of the Gullah Negroes through-

[25] The terms of the overseer's contract required his presence on the plantation except under urgent circumstances.

9: Parrish B-4,5 (ca.1916-1941) 1942
NN23 Sea Islanders NN23
Georgia
St. Simon's Island



252 the meal fell into a basket, but I still cannot see how this was possible when the
256 stones were circular. Belle says that her mill was set up in a box and the meal fell
[402] into it.

I go into detail because no one has told me so clearly as Belle how the work was done. She obligingly sold me the mill that came from Butler's Point where she was born, and said: "I wish I had a dollar for every mess of grits I've ground in it." Lonnie Davis says he knows how to set it up, and soon I hope to be grinding enough meal at the Cabin to supply Belle's needs and mine.

533 A colored man who used to be a "shack-rouser" at a railroad camp on the
461 Georgia Central Line sang these warning lines before he gave the rat-a-tat-tat, with
539 a stick, on the different doors.

Wake up buddy
An' sit on the rock
It ain't quite day
But it's four o'clock
Rata-tat-tat!

Next door:
Hey buddy
It's hard but it's fair
You had a good home
But you wouldn't stay there
Rata-tat-tat!

And the next:
I had a little kitten
He grow to be a mouser
Yonder come
That cruel shack-rouser
Rata-tat-tat!

534 Shad Hall, who lives on Sapelo, showed me how the conch was blown in olden
533 times to get the hands out to work before day. It was a joy to find that the musical
[202] note I had heard on the Riviera was used in this country in spite of Thomas Spald-
[197] ing's dislike of music. His antipathy was such that he banned all instruments—except one fiddle which was retained for dancing. It is just possible that Mr. Spalding's attitude resulted in the same reaction among the Sapelo Negroes as was seen among those of the Quaker community in which I was born. In neither section did the Negroes hear much of the white folks' music, and for that reason, perhaps, they relied upon their traditional tunes more than they would have otherwise.

11: Johnson H-4,5 (no date) 1930
(1525-ca. 1880)
NN23 Sea Islanders NN23
South Carolina
St. Helena Island



out crossing the feet, to the tune of a spiritual. Nor did the Negroes take their violins into the praise houses, for the missionaries also taught them that fiddle music was sinful since the fiddle furnished the tunes for the old dances. The last violin on St. Helena Island before the Civil War is said to have been owned by a Negro on Coffin's Point, but he got rid of it before "big gun shoot," as the Negroes called the battle of Port Royal.

Sir Charles Lyell observed the same kind of religious worship on the Georgia Sea Islands and mainland. "On the Hopeton plantation above twenty violins have been silenced by the Methodist missionaries," he wrote in 1845. "At the Methodist prayer-meetings, they are permitted to move rapidly in a ring, joining hands in token of brotherly love, presenting first the right hand and then the left, in which manœuvre, I am told, they sometimes contrive to take enough exercise to serve as a substitute for the dance, it being, in fact, a kind of spiritual *boulanger* [?], while the singing of psalms, in and out of chapel, compensates in no small degree for the songs they have been required to renounce."[80]

The religious life of the slaves was organized by the whites upon the same plan as their own. On plantations of any size, slaves who had joined the church were formed into a class, at the head of which was one of their own number, acting as deacon or leader, who was also sometimes a licensed preacher.[81] The leader who was the head of the praise house often decided in council with his subordinates, the watchmen, whether a candidate for member-

[80] Lyell, *Second Visit to the United States*, I, 269, 270.
[81] "Negro Slavery at the South," DeBow, *Industrial Resources of the United States*, II, 251.